Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 13 with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Running an extremely high gain in a multi-pass amplifier can have some drawbacks, however, as there can be an increased [[lever]] level of amplified spontaneous emission (ASE) in the laser output. The high gain also can result in undesirable feedback to the MO. Therefore, certain embodiments can provide optical decoupling between a PA and an MO, as well as between passes of a beam through a PA. By optically decoupling the PA and the MO, high output pulse energy can be obtained with low energy fluctuations. Further, ASE can be suppressed to less than 0.1% of the total laser output.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 8 with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Once the beam makes a first pass through the PA in a multi-pass configuration, the beam can pass through a second spatial filter **118** and be retro-reflected by a retro-reflector **120** for a second pass through the second spatial filter **118** and the PA **112**. The beam is coupled away from the PA path by reflector 124. The retro-reflector **120** can be removed a distance from the PA, such as a distance that is equal to a portion of the pulse length. Such separation can help to increase the "time window" of amplification, resulting in the overall gain being less sensitive to the time jitter between successive discharges.--